

## ***Why can't we manage Lake Davis for trophy pike?***

In a "trophy size" northern pike fishery, a person can reasonably expect to catch a pike at 36 inches long.

Lake Davis is a relatively shallow lake, averaging less than 20 feet in depth, with about 30% of the lake bottom covered with aquatic vegetation. It typically freezes over in the winter and is moderately warm in the summer. The vegetation is ideal habitat for aquatic invertebrates and snails, which are the main food source for many young fish. Adult rainbow trout feed heavily on these items as well. The existing golden shiner, pumpkinseed sunfish and brown bullhead population would be able to be sustained on the invertebrate population. Adult pike would not be able to be adequately sustained on the invertebrates.

If Lake Davis were managed as a trophy northern pike lake, the Department of Fish and Game would stop stocking rainbow trout. This is because the trout would be prey for the pike, providing little fishing opportunity for angling. The Fish and Game Commission's policy for continued stocking of rainbow trout requires a return to the creel of either 50% by number or by weight of trout stocked. The presence of trophy-sized northern pike in the lake would most likely negate either of these return-to-creel criteria.

Large adult pike would possibly feed heavily on the fish in the lake. The populations of shiners, sunfish and bullheads would be severely impacted after several years of heavy predation. With the loss or severe reduction in this forage base, it is estimated that the adult northern pike would either die off or be removed through angling. Many different studies have indicated that to have a trophy pike fishery, one must have a prey species which grows to ten inches in length or greater.

The remaining smaller pike would be unable to grow to become a "trophy size" pike greater than 36 inches, and a bottle-neck effect would occur whereby the largest size a pike would reach would be in the high teens or low twenty inch class. Pike of this size would not provide a trophy fishery and anglers would most likely cease fishing for the pike.

Having pike in Lake Davis greatly increases the risk that pike will move downstream either naturally or be illegally moved by humans to other California waters. The pike has been recognized by the Legislature and Fish and Game Commission as being a deleterious species to California. Consequently, pike are illegal in any waters within the state of California.



**Catch a pike? Kill it and call 1-888-CALTip and leave a message, or call our office at (530) 832-9682. You can also turn the fish in to Grizzly Store at Lake Davis or Dollard's Sierra Market in Portola.**

California Department of Fish and Game - Portola Field Office - 209 Commercial Street - P.O. Box 1858 - Portola, CA 96122 - (530) 832-4067 - [www.dfg.ca.gov/northernpike](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/northernpike)